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MAYOR EMANUEL LAUNCHES THE CHICAGO RIVERWALK SUMMER SEASON

Residents and visitors will enjoy another season of Fishing at the Jetty, kayaking, great food, live music and more

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today joined the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) and Fleet and Facility Management (2FM) to officially kick off the summer season of programming at the Chicago Riverwalk. The Riverwalk will bring back returning favorites like Chicago's First Lady, Tiny Tapp and Fishing at the Jetty, and introduce new concessionaires including Chicago Brewhouse, The Northman and Frost Gelato.

"With this summer season of Riverwalk upon us, it is easy to see why the Chicago River is the city's next recreational frontier," said Mayor Emanuel. "From kayaking, to fishing, to live music and great food, there is an exciting activity for visitors and residents across Chicago to enjoy this summer along the Riverwalk."

The summer programming preview and kick off will run from May 18 – 20, with a variety of activities including walking tours led by the Chicago Architecture Foundation, Fishing at the Jetty led by the Chicago Park District, and a pyrotechnic display on the LaSalle Street, Clark Street, Dearborn Street and State Street bridges.

"The three-day Chicago Riverwalk celebration will offer an extravaganza of music, art, architecture, fireworks and more," said Mark Kelly, Commissioner of the Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events. "We invite Chicagoans and visitors to escape the everyday and embrace this magnificent urban space and all it has to offer throughout the year."

The award-winning Riverwalk offers a new perspective on Chicago's own unique waterfronts and architecture as the backdrop for summer. Completed in the fall of 2016, the Chicago Riverwalk (Lake Shore Dr. to Lake St.) is a 1.25-mile promenade through the heart of the city and a destination for Chicagoans and visitors alike to enjoy art, music and more. In 2018, the Riverwalk was awarded the AIA Award for Architecture and the AIA Honor Award for Regional and Urban Design

"The Chicago Riverwalk has changed the way people interact with the Chicago River and continues to offer new ways for residents and visitors to embrace Chicago's beauty and culture," 2FM Commissioner David Reynolds said. "2FM is proud to maintain the Riverwalk as part of Mayor Emanuel's effort to build on Daniel Burnham's vision for Chicago."

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The Chicago Riverwalk Summer Kick-Off Celebration is presented by the City of Chicago and produced by DCASE in collaboration with 2FM, Choose Chicago, the Chicago Park District, the vendors and boat tour operators along the Riverwalk.

During opening weekend and throughout the summer season, various activities, entertainment and specials will be offered at participating vendor locations and various boat tour operators: Chicago Architecture Foundation, Chicago Brewhouse, Chicago Electric Boat Company, Chicago's First Lady Cruises-Mercury, Chicago's Skyline Cruiseline, Chicago Water Taxi, City Winery, Downtown Docks, Frost Gelato, Island Party Hut and Boat Charters, McCormick, Bridgehouse and Chicago River Museum, The Northman, O'Briens Riverwalk Café, Tiny Tapp and Café, Urban Kayaks and Wendalla Sightseeing.

The Riverwalk is open to the public from 6 a.m.–11 p.m. throughout the year. Chicago Riverwalk Summer Kick-Off Celebration activities are free unless otherwise noted. For more information about the Chicago Riverwalk and a complete schedule of events, visit chicagoriverwalk.us—and join the conversation on social media using #ChiRiverwalk.

At the close of the season, Mayor Emanuel and DCASE will join theMART to unveil Art on theMart, a permanent large-scale lighting installation across nearly three acres of the southern facing façade of theMART. The installation project, privately funded by Vornado Realty Trust, marks the first time a projection of its size and scope will be completely dedicated to art projection with no branding, sponsorship credits, or messaging allowed. It will be a curated, ongoing series of ever-changing installations that will begin after dusk for pedestrians and residents to enjoy.

The Riverwalk is a key component of Building on Burnham, Mayor Emanuel's comprehensive plan to invest in the Lakefront, the Chicago River, natural areas and recreational opportunities in neighborhoods across the city. To date, 985 acres of parks have been acquired and 5.5 miles of waterfront access have been developed under the Building on Burnham plan.

Since 2011, the Chicago River has been transformed into the city's next recreational park, with vast opportunities for residents and visitors to access and enjoy the river at almost every mile. The Chicago Riverwalk, which covers 1.25-miles through the heart of the city, was completed in 2016 and continues to offer new and improved ways to enjoy Chicago's waterfronts and architecture.